



**GREATER ORLANDO
AVIATION AUTHORITY**

June 24, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary

The Honorable Carol A. (Annie) Petsonk
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Application of Norse Atlantic UK Limited
Docket No. DOT-OST-2022-0072

Dear Secretary Buttigieg and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Petsonk:

The Orlando International Airport (MCO) writes in strong support of the Application of Norse Atlantic UK Ltd (Norse Atlantic UK) for an exemption and a foreign air carrier permit to operate scheduled and charter air services between the United Kingdom and the United States consistent with the terms of the 2020 Air Transport Agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom.

Orlando was the most visited U.S. destination in 2019 (the last full year before the COVID-19 global pandemic), with 75 million visitors. These visitors come from around the country and the world, including London specifically and the United Kingdom.

In CY 2019, nearly 800,000 passengers traveled between London (Gatwick) and MCO, more than 938,000 passengers traveled between London and MCO, and more than 1.6 million passengers traveled between the United Kingdom and MCO.¹ For the six-year period between 2016 and 2021 (which included two years crippled by the global pandemic), more than 2.9 million passengers traveled between London (Gatwick) and MCO, more than 3.7 million passengers traveled between London and MCO, and more than 6.8 million passengers traveled between the United Kingdom and MCO.² For CY 2019, London (Gatwick) was the largest international air travel route for MCO, with Manchester (UK) being ranked 3rd largest, and London (Heathrow) ranked 16th largest.³ Dozens of companies with headquarters, country of origin or significant presences in the United Kingdom have presences in the Orlando metropolitan area.⁴

Airlines have scheduled 35 weekly London flights to MCO this summer, with scheduled reductions to 17 and 15 weekly frequencies in November and December 2022, respectively.⁵ The flights offered by Norse Atlantic UK would provide additional service options, more capacity, and

¹ According to Airline Data Inc.

² According to Airline Data Inc.

³ According to Airline Data Inc.

⁴ According to Enterprise Florida.

⁵ According to Airline Data Inc.

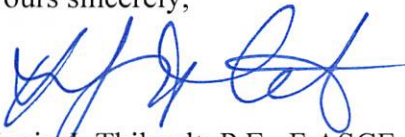
increased competition for travelers between London and Orlando, as well as replacing some of the capacity lost due to the bankruptcy of Thomas Cook in 2019, all of which are significant benefits for travelers as the U.S. has lifted pre-departure COVID-19 testing restrictions for travelers on international flights, and as international air travel picks up again. More nonstop service options between London and Orlando will also provide significant benefits to the residents, communities, and businesses in the greater Orlando and Central Florida areas, by providing enhanced access to the United Kingdom for them and bringing more overseas visitors to Orlando and Central Florida.

MCO also supports the Application of Norse Atlantic UK because of the job creation opportunities that Norse Atlantic UK intends to provide in Florida. The Association of Flight Attendants and Norse Atlantic Airways reached a pre-hire agreement for U.S.-based flight attendant jobs.⁶

For the reasons outlined above, the Orlando International Airport strongly supports, and urges the Department to expeditiously approve, the Norse Atlantic UK Application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Kevin J. Thibault, P.E., F.ASCE
Chief Executive Officer
Orlando International Airport

⁶ See *Flight Attendant Union and Norse Atlantic Airways Reach Historic Pre-Hire Agreement with Neutrality and Contract Subject to Ratification by Future Crew*, May 27, 2021, available at https://www.afacwa.org/afa_norse_reach_prehire_agreement_neutrality_contract